

PEOPLE & THINGS

By ATTICUS

THE alarming repercussions of the Salk vaccine inoculations in the United States have completely vindicated the cautious attitude of the Medical Research Council in Britain, and the two concerns in this country, the Wellcome Foundation and Glaxo Laboratories, entrusted by the Government with the manufacture of a really efficacious vaccine against poliomyelitis are proceeding with infinite care.

In the opinion of Mr. Michael Perrin, chairman of the Wellcome Foundation, the successful vaccine may differ from that to which Dr. Salk has given his name, and if so the animal kingdom will benefit even more than man, for the Salk vaccine requires an almost limitless supply of Indian Rhesus monkeys. The Americans were using five thousand a month in their initial tests, and with general inoculation, the Rhesus monkey population would quickly be wiped out.

Mr. Perrin's scientific staff (his letter on page six today is particularly apropos) are exploring the possibilities of a vaccine which, like the one used against yellow fever, can be grown in eggs so that use of animal tissue can be avoided.

Perrin of Wellcome's

MICHAEL PERRIN, who will doubtless be exasperated by this over-simplification of an infinitely difficult research problem, is typical of the back-room men, quite unknown to the public, who contribute signally but in silence to England's place in the world.

A Wykehamist, the first ten years of his career were spent with I.C.L. and during this time he and his colleagues discovered "Polythene," whose insulating properties were vital to our development of radar. During the war he worked for Tube Alloys, the phantom organisation under cover of which our wartime atomic-bomb research was carried out.

Quite incidentally, and without subsequent fanfare, Perrin took a leading part in smuggling Professor Niels Bohr, the great Danish physicist, out of occupied Denmark under the noses of the Germans.

All the Talents

GRESHAM'S SCHOOL is celebrating its Quater Centenary this year, and its literary magazine, "The Grasshopper," is marking the occasion by a special anniversary number. This, I anticipate, will become something of a collector's piece, for among the "O.G.s" contributing to it are W. H. Auden, Benjamin Britten, and John Hayward.

Any school could be proud of producing the outstanding poet, composer and *bellettriste* of their generation, but Gresham's is not only one of the smaller public schools, but also one of the youngest, the modern Gresham's having been created only fifty years ago from the 400-year-old Grammar School at Holt.

No less remarkable is the supporting talent which Gresham's produced in the same generation, among many others—in literature (Stephen Spender—junior school—and John Pudney), in painting (Robert Medley), in the theatre (Peter Brook and Sebastian Shaw), in journalism (the E**** of The S**** T****), in science (Sir Owen Wansbrough-Jones), in the Church (the Bishop of Accra), in Irish nationalism (Pekine Children the

second), and in diplomacy (one of the "Missing Diplomats"—and, depend on Gresham's, the more distinguished of the two).

A Time for Silence

MR. EVELYN WAUGH will not have a meal in any restaurant which has a juke box or a radio, and he recently wrote a sharp letter to the Press suggesting that the Michelin Guides should have a new sign for silent restaurants.

I support him whole-heartedly and I am happy to report that the Germans have invented a juke box which, for 20 pfennigs, will play nothing.

Among the batch of tunes in this new juke box there are so-called "Intermission" records which spin noiselessly and these can be played for the same price as the others.

Special Correspondent

MY colleague John Russell has just returned from his remarkable visit to Dr. Schweitzer in Equatorial Africa. His departure six weeks ago was strongly reminiscent of the beginning of "Scoop." Mr. Evelyn Waugh's devastating caricature of Fleet Street, in which the hero, having read somewhere that one carried despatches in cleft sticks, had some specially cloven for him by Lillywhites.

Similarly documented by contemporary accounts of the pioneer expeditions of the 1870s, Mr. Russell had planned to take with him the pocket barometer, the Winchester repeater, and the supply of rhubarb desiccated by Brazza. Other counsels prevailed; and in the end his chief link with the heroic epoch was his second-hand tropical hat (by Moss Bros.)—a capacious helmet of cork and rubber, duck-billed at its stern and crowned by a revolving brass-lined cupola.

This made of him a conspicuous, though diffident, figure and for some time, he tells me, the natives were unable to place him in any existing category of white men; but at length, after elaborate passages of jungle-telegraphy, a tatterdemalion Ancient was deputed to greet him with a cry of "God Save The Queen!"

Justitia

SHAKESPEARE'S Justice "with eyes severe and beard of formal cut" had to be rewritten with the creation of the first woman J.P., but now that the distinction has been conferred on an attractive woman of just thirty years of age it will be forever discarded.

The new member of the Bench is Sir Miles Thomas's daughter, Sheila, who is married to Dr. Julian von Bergen. Although she never practised, she is also a doctor and qualified on the same day as her husband.

Even in these days, when every effort is being made to get younger blood on the Bench, I believe there have been only two or three instances of even a man being appointed so young.

The John Family

AMONG those who were kept at home by the strike was Mr. Augustus John, who had hoped to come to London last Wednesday for the Mayor Gallery's exhibition of paintings by his son-in-law Mr. Willems Pol.

Mr. John has, I hear, returned in his most exuberant and re-invigorated form from an extended convalescence near Malaga. Page after lapidary page has been added to his new volume of autobio-

graphy, and in his garden-studio at Fordingbridge he is once again addressing himself to the enormous decorations which are among the best-kept and most-often-amended secrets of contemporary painting.

By Wednesday evening, I noticed the red badge of success ornamented more than half of Mr. Pol's paintings; and I was reminded that, on the occasion of his daughter Poppet's marriage, Mr. John is reputed to have said, "Splendid. An artist in the family at last!"